



Lean Enterprise Transformation: Building the Infrastructure

Plenary Wrap-Up Lessons Learned

Prof. John S. Carroll
Lean Aerospace Initiative Plenary Conference
March 24, 2005



Conference Accomplishments

- We shared **stories** of progress, impact, insights, lessons learned, principles, problems, plans, and prospects for the future
- We continued to build a **learning community** and network of resources bridging across government, industry, and academia
- We challenged ourselves to **dream big**: from local projects to national and global enterprises, from operational to strategic, from customers to stakeholders, from aerospace to healthcare
- We had **fun**!



Some Observations of the Conference

- A lot of positive energy in the room during the talks: real interest, excitement
- A trusting atmosphere where people could reveal setbacks as well as successes, ask tough questions, and talk about the politics of change
- Change is a contact sport: many examples of learning from others, inside and outside the organization and industry, asking for and getting help. “Our culture is when people need help, you send very good people.”
- Our graduate students have had wonderful conversations and offers of support



Voices Of The Consortium

- “It’s tough to transform without changing”
- “Lean is a way of life”
- “It’s about people, nurturing hearts and minds... every employee, every day, making their process better”
- “An engineer organization is training skeptical”
- “Our lab is our whole aerospace industry Consortium”
- “My guys in the Pentagon tell me they can’t get me this data; where did you get it?”
- “Big step to commit to grow our own lean leaders”
- “Culture is where the gold is”
- “Understand your enterprise before doing lean”
- “Start where you’re wanted”



Wrestling With Big Questions

- Constant temptation to deliver tactical results vs. enterprise transformation
- Does change require a “burning platform”? Can a mature culture sustain and grow lean without fear? Are there many ways to create/assess readiness for lean change?
- Does the same approach work in every organization, defense or civilian, large or small? Top-down, bottom-up, middle-up-down?
- Leaders go first, except when they go second. How can we socialize and coach leaders, e.g., “walk the wall”?
- How can we influence things outside our control?

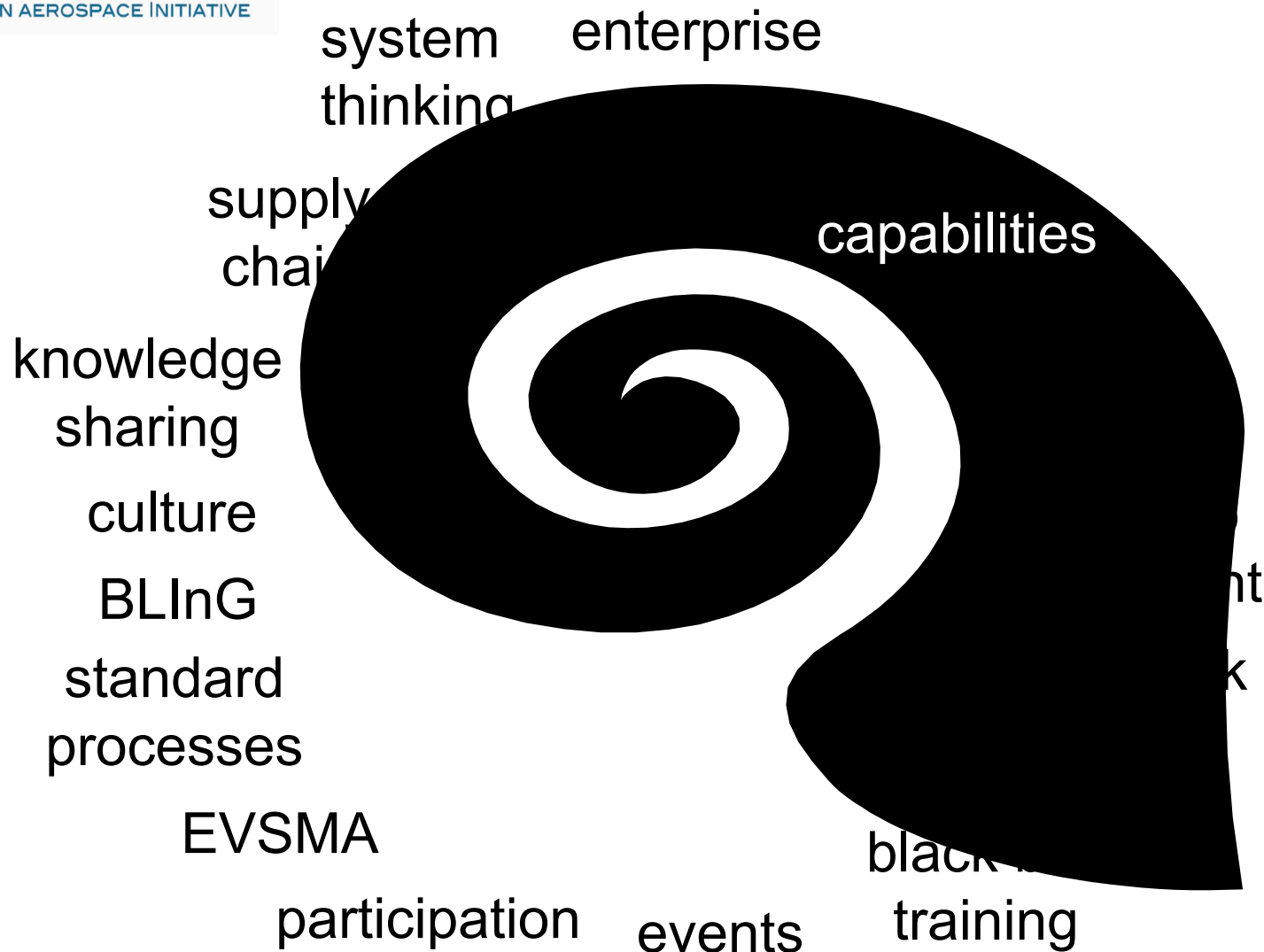


Infrastructure for Transformation

- Shared language, shared definitions and understandings, and collaborative work
- Trustful relationships underlie empowerment, leadership success as role models, valuing multiple stakeholders' participation. Connect people first. Focus on valued results and equitable incentives rather than credit and blame.
- Leadership support and participation
- In-house expertise
- Culture that supports openness and learning, helping each other, teamwork, “try-storm”



Spiral Development





Enterprise Transformation?

- **Challenge 1:** Take action with partial planning: spiral development of lean thinking, lean projects. “More is possible than you think.” Work together on real problems that people care about. “Visioning is hard work.”
- **Challenge 2:** Standardize tasks and processes, but in ways that encourage innovation. Remember, lean is a way of thinking about and seeing the system, not just tools
- **Challenge 3:** Reluctance to define enterprise for “fear of stepping on toes.” Not about control, but customer value and stakeholder relationships. Defining enterprise narrowly may be limiting.
- **Challenge 4:** Patience. Business case is based on faith; measures and numbers come later. Culture based on successes: “take the hill, plant the flag, move on” but enterprise change needs persistence due to J-curves.



Parting Thoughts

- We are ***all*** part of this learning community.
- We welcome your participation and need your inputs.
- Help us make research part of ***all*** we do.
- Your inputs are essential in shaping the Consortium's future direction and goals.
- Hope you have enjoyed the conference and are taking away some new ideas you can use.
- Stay connected! See you next year!